2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Bushmen FX10

a most desolate appearance. Verdure is entirely wanting, the numerous gullies are empty, and the low ranges of ironstone koppies which dot the plains seem to reflect the heat as from a mirror. The vegetation is composed very largely of drought-resisting thorn bushes, succulents, bulbous and tuberous plants. Grasses appear only in exceptionally wet years, while trees are usually absent, except along the dry river-courses and on the mountain slopes in the east, where the rainfall is highest. Till the early years of the nineteenth century the Great Karroo was regarded as a desert unfit for man or beast; since then well-sinking and donkey transport have bettered the conditions, and the region has gradually become occupied.

Fauna

The great variety of habitat provided by the country taken as a whole has naturally favoured the development of a varied and abundant fauna.[1] South Africa has long been renowned for the wealth of its larger forms of animal life, although with the advance of European settlement and colonization the numbers have been rapidly reduced, particularly of certain classes of big game. The native inhabitants had certainly done something to reduce the numbers and affect the distribution of the fauna, but a balance had been reached which still left the country richly stocked. The Cape was full of game when the first European settlers established themselves there 250 years ago, and in their gradual spread inland the white men found the same abundance of fine forms of animal life in each new tract of country that they entered. A few decades were enough to convert each newly-opened district from a hunter's paradise into a stock-farming country, and the increase of veld-burning carried the destruction into other zones of life. But over large parts of South Africa the face of the country itself has been little changed on the whole, and a good deal of the original fauna has survived, even on much of the enclosed land.

The mammalian fauna is, or rather was, characterized by the great abundance and variety of antelopes, the presence of such remarkable "living fossils" as the elephant, giraffe, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and aardvark, as well as of the buffalo, zebra, and quagga, and the abundance of carnivora, large and small. During the eighteenth

[1] An excellent short account is given by Dr. E. L. Gill, "Descriptive Sketch of the Fauna of South Africa," *Official Year Book of the Union*, No. 9, pp. 31–41. Cf. also Passarge, op. cit., pp. 78–86.